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**A RATIONAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING THE INTELLIGENCE
POTENTIAL OF CABLE NEWS NETWORK (CNN)**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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from the

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ABSTRACT

Cable News Network (CNN) was America's number one source of information during Desert Shield/ Desert Storm as well as a critical source of information for the US. Intelligence Community. CNN set the precedence for future conflicts by offering 24 hours of coverage, most of it live. CNN is also an unique source of information because it has access to people and places which are not available to the Intelligence Community. The strengths and weaknesses of the media are studied in order to develop a method of evaluating the intelligence potential of CNN. Using the theoretical principles of Alfred Korzybski and Geraldine Forsberg, a rational approach to understanding the intelligence potential is developed.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cable News Network (CNN) has become the dominant television news organization in the last decade. CNN left its mark in history during Desert Shield/Desert Storm (DS/DS) by providing the first real-time, live coverage of a war. Technology has made CNN a global network that is available to virtually every nation in the world. CNN has set the precedence for 24 hour real-time reporting. It was America's number one source of information during DS/DS and was a critical source of open source information for the Intelligence Community. CNN is another source of information for the Intelligence Community, but it is unlike no other source that is available to the Intelligence Community. It can gain access to people and places that are not normally available to the Intelligence Community. Its technological mastery allows it to reach the Intelligence Community before many of the other sources of information.

CNN can offer the Intelligence Community a great deal of advantages that other sources can not such as access and speed. However, there are some disadvantages to using CNN as a source: CNN is susceptible to propaganda and disinformation; its reporting is unevaluated (raw data in intelligence terms), yet is often accepted as unequivocal truth, and the very nature of news reporting ejects significant biases into CNN reporting. Despite CNN's disadvantages, it can still be a valuable source as long as the Intelligence Community can rationally think about the intelligence potential of CNN. CNN makes an excellent "cueing" tool for the Intelligence Community, i.e., CNN may be the first hint of a problem and thus the Intelligence Community can focus specific -- and trusted -- collection systems on the problem.

The other sources of information that the Intelligence Community utilizes have been evaluated for their credibility, accuracy, reliability and objectivity. A method by which to evaluate CNN by these criteria has not been established and is basically

impossible to do because the status of these different criteria change minute by minute, reporter by reporter, and topic by topic when dealing with CNN. So the primary focus of this thesis is to develop a rational approach to understand the intelligence potential of CNN since its intelligence potential cannot be measured statistically. It is imperative that the Intelligence Community understand the strengths and weaknesses of television, television news and in particular, CNN. This rational approach is based upon Alfred Korzybski's theoretical principles extended to critical television evaluation by Geraldine Forsberg. It is through an understanding of those elements that an individual can begin to think rationally about CNN and its intelligence potential.

I. INTRODUCTION

Cable News Network (CNN) left its mark in history during Desert Shield/Desert Storm (DS/DS). Television was the number one source of information for most Americans. CNN set the precedence for future wars by offering 24 hours of coverage of the war, most of which was live. The face of broadcast journalism was changed forever. No other war has provided viewers around the world with live, real-time reporting. CNN was America's number one source of information during DS/DS and was a critical source of open source information for the Intelligence Community. The use of CNN as source of information by the Intelligence Community is a fairly recent concept. Unlike the other systems of information, such as satellites, radar, signals, etc., the Intelligence Community has not developed a method by which to evaluate such sources as CNN. But in order to develop such an evaluation system there must be a rational understanding of the intelligence potential of CNN. In future conflicts and war, living rooms and intelligence watch centers alike will turn to CNN. Thus, the Intelligence Community must be able to rationally evaluate the intelligence potential of CNN. One approach to rationally thinking about the intelligence potential of CNN is to analyze CNN against Alfred Korzybski's theoretical principles. Those principles were extended to critical television evaluation by Geraldine Forsberg in doctoral dissertation for New York University.

Rear Admiral Brent Baker, former Chief of Information for the United States Navy, stated in a speech that, "There is a 'New Media Order' within the context of technology, political realities and economic changes. Our government, military and business leaders need to understand the New World Order" (Baker, 1993, pp. 3) As far as Baker is concerned this concept refers to organizations such as CNN and MTV.

According to ADM. Baker, the advantages of the "New Media Order": direct dialogue with real citizens rather than skeptical reporters; instantaneous "live" access to audiences during special events while the old channels are reluctant to cut off commercial programming; 24-hour-a-day availability; and global reach of CNN/MTV which traditional American networks don't provide. (Baker, 1993, pp. 4) ADM. Baker further stressed the importance of this concept, "So in the 1990s with the combined communications firepower of computers, satellites and CNN global television we have moved dramatically closer to Marshall McLuhan's vision of a 'global village'".(Baker, 1992, pp. 581) CNN can put people in touch at a moments' notice with the events happening on the other side of the world.

CNN, through the aggressive and adroit use of emerging communications technology, has changed the way the world conducts its affairs. Dick Cheney once said, "As an administrative official, its gotten increasingly difficult to sort out what we know from intelligence and what we know from CNN... But clearly [CNN] is a factor now in the way we do business." (Baker, 1993, pp. 5)

Why has CNN made such an impact and become so important? One reason is the CNN's coverage has allowed it to be a global network. "As the broadcast networks have trimmed their news operations for economic reasons, CNN has developed into TV's most comprehensive and reliable gatherer of news: the wire service of television." (Zoglin, 1991, pp. 70) CNN has the ability to be in more than one place at the same time. CNN can literally cover all the world. They do not have to worry about one or two star reporters draining them financially dry. "CNN is subsidized by cable companies and doesn't have reporters or anchor persons who get multi-million dollar contracts, they are OK! In fact, the old networks have surrendered in a news sense to CNN." (Baker, 1993, pp. 5) Instead CNN, unlike the other networks, has a large number of reporters that

allows them to cover more news. (Zoglin, 1991, pp. 70) "The network's importance as a supplier of news in 103 countries around the world has a lot to do with it. As is now well known, its viewers include Saddam Hussein; during the gulf crisis, many Middle Eastern leaders, as well as many officials in the US., have relied upon CNN as a sort of instant 24-hour messenger service."(Zoglin, 1991, pp. 71)

In a Northwestern University NROTC Public Affairs Lecture, ADM. Baker discussed his beliefs and thoughts concerning CNN:

I believe CNN is the dominant factor in the news media today. Clearly we must all understand that in the 1990s CNN has arrived with the technological and editorial ability to reach out instantaneously and globally. From Atlanta CNN itself influences and is a key communications player in global events. CNN employees are instructed that they are a worldwide news and information network -- not just an American network. (Baker, 1992, pp. 581)

For a variety of reasons, the media and CNN, in particular, are becoming an important source of open information for the Intelligence Community. " ... the media is also becoming involved in what may be thought of as intelligence collection and analysis. Because of the expanding technological capability of the media, its traditional function and relationship with official intelligence agencies is blurring." (Ryan, 1993, pp. 20) Walter Cronkite while testifying before the Senate Government Operations Committee stated that he thought the military was getting "valuable intelligence" from CNN during Desert Shield Storm. "They (the military) must be getting some almost incredible intelligence out of having the CNN cameras and other cameras in Baghdad"¹

¹Walter Cronkite quoted in an Accuracy Media Report. March 1991.

CNN's live reporting from crisis makes real-time information available to intelligence centers around the world at relatively very little cost. "...it is clear that CNN sets the competitive speed or pace of all major news coverage. Go to any military command center or any newspaper in America -- they will both have CNN on 24 hours, as the first electronic cue to what's happening." (Baker, 1992, pp. 582)

Just exactly what is CNN to the Intelligence Community? It is simply another source of information. CNN is what the Intelligence Community calls Open Source Information (OSI), and its operations are closely related to those of a long-established well-understood intelligence discipline: Human Intelligence (HUMINT). OSI is the collection of information from unclassified sources such as newscasts, commercial data bases, periodicals/journals, newspapers, foreign TV programs, people, etc.

According to Admiral William Studeman, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, "... no other area is full of more promise for intelligence than open source access and exploitation." (Studeman, 1992, pp. 82) In fact, according to ADM. Studeman there have been times in history, specifically during crises, where open source information has been the Intelligence Community's only source. (Studeman, 1992, pp. 82) One important point to keep in mind when dealing with the media and the Intelligence Community is that they have similar missions: the planning and directing, collecting, producing/analyzing and disseminating information.

... intelligence and the media are in the same business, that is ultimately, to tell a story of relevant interest, but in our case, the story normally relates to a threat or a foreign issue of high or potential interest to US or allied policymakers, planners, or warfighters. Our goal is not necessarily to produce raw open source data, but to glean information from open sources that is of interest to intelligence as background reference material for collectors and analysts/producers, and, more importantly as a source of

information to be fused with data from classified sources and methods and this is again principally for the government consumer. (Studeman, 1992, pp. 83)

There is an abundance of open source information that goes untapped every day, and CNN is one of those sources. Sources such as CNN, who are able to be a global network by covering numerous and diverse events around the world, can provide the Intelligence Community with insight into a wide range of issues. "Today, with a generally more open world and a considerably more free and independent world press, open sources have even greater value for intelligence. In the new global environment, open sources provide much more hard, credible data about a wide range of international political, social and economic issues." (Studeman, 1992, pp. 85) One drawback to dealing with open source information is processing the vast amount of information that one can obtain from these types of sources. "Of course, the key issue for intelligence analysts is not simply the quantity of open source data that is collected, but also its quality -- that is, its intelligence value." (Studeman, 1992, pp. 88)

The Intelligence Community is concerned with the data it can gather from open sources and the credibility of the material received.

While untrustworthy data can often be associated with classified sources and methods, open source data can be a frequent source of biased and misleading information, or worse yet, the product of deliberate deception or information control practiced in parts of the world by a less free press that may also operate as a propaganda instrument of government forces. This dictates that a strong data evaluation system be in place for use with open source data, as it is for classified data. (Studeman, 1992, pp. 84)

The purpose of this thesis is to establish a rational approach for understanding the intelligence potential of CNN's information. Before an evaluation method can be created

for CNN, a rational approach to understanding the intelligence potential of CNN must be developed. The type of information CNN provides as well as the strengths and weaknesses must be determined in order to develop a method by which to evaluate CNN. One might think that CNN's information could be evaluated much like that of technical systems -- based on the following criteria: accuracy, reliability, objectiveness, timeliness, coverage and dissemination. This is impossible; these criteria change with every minute, every topic, every situation and every reporter. Case studies fail to establish the credibility and reliability because the conditions for reporting each case and future cases differ dramatically with little or no analytical standardization. A combination of varied and unpredictable factors, such as reporters, the amount of available technology, the types and numbers of sources, the topic, the location of the report, dictate the level of credibility and reliability of CNN's information.

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Following the introduction, Chapter II discusses the differences and similarities of news reporting and intelligence reporting. Chapter III examines the manner in which CNN operates and makes decisions. Also included in Chapter III is the type of information that CNN can provide the intelligence community. The limitations of news broadcasting, television and CNN in particular are discussed in Chapter IV. And finally, the elements for rationally understanding the intelligence potential of CNN's information is presented in Chapter V.

II. INFORMATION AND INTELLIGENCE

The News Media and the Intelligence Community are both adversaries and allies.

"The relationship of the US news media and the Intelligence Community is beset with inherent contradictions. The two might often be seen as natural allies since each is intent on uncovering information ... As natural duplicates in the delivery of the same product, the two could also be seen as competitors and rivals." (Hopple, 1986, pp. 245) In essence, the Intelligence Community and the news media have a common mission: the tasking and directing, collecting, processing, producing and disseminating of information. "Many Americans might assume initially that intelligence and press activities are entirely different. The first is carried on by the state, the second by agencies entirely independent of the state." (Hopple, 1986, pp. 245) But among their differences are similarities in how they operate. Each of these organizations can benefit from the work that the other performs. "And since information builds on information, what the press unearths will nourish the Intelligence Community, just as what the Intelligence Community unearths will nourish the press." (Hopple, 1986, pp. 245)

A. DEFINITIONS

In order to evaluate the intelligence potential of CNN, it is necessary to define exactly what is meant by intelligence, news and information. The distinction between information and intelligence is also important.

1. Intelligence

What is intelligence? "Strictly speaking, intelligence can be defined as 'the product resulting from the collection, evaluation, analysis, integration and interpretation of all available information which concerns one or more aspects of foreign nations or of areas of operation which is immediately or potentially significant for planning'. (Richelson, 1986, pp. 2) There are some people who believe that intelligence is nothing more than collection

of information or data. This belief is not necessarily valid: information is not automatically intelligence.

2. News

"Textbook writers have asserted that news is 'stimulating information,' 'anything timely,' 'a timely report,' 'the report of an event.' It also has been described as 'literature in a hurry' and 'tomorrow's history.'" (Campbell, 1961, pp. 4) News is considered to be a story, report or account; an account of an idea, event or problem; an account of something real; an account of something that interests people; and an account of current items. According to Edward Jay Epstein, immediacy is what distinguishes news from all other forms of knowledge. (Epstein, 1973, pp. 30) "In the communication process, news is a message. The sender is a reporter who encodes it. He uses words or pictures to share an idea, fact, or problem. He is successful if the receiver gets precisely the same meaning as the reporter's." (Campbell, 1961, pp. 4) Basically, the reporter is a fact-finder. However, over time the definition of news has changed, but the role of the reporter has remained the same. In *Time* magazine's 1991 "Man of the Year" story, Ted Turner stated that CNN has rewritten the definition of news, "The very definition of news was rewritten -- from something that has happened to something that is happening at the very moment you are hearing of it."² The change in the definition of news is due to the evolution of technology, and it is the technology that has made CNN accessible. "This new definition of news has been made possible by revolutionary improvements in technology ... This technology, however, was employed to transport the viewer to the big event, not to increase the viewer's understanding of the big picture." (Gottschalk, 1992, pp. 472)

²Turner quoted in Gottschalk, pp. 472.

3. Information

The Joint Publication for Support to Intelligence Operations presents the Intelligence Community's definition of information. "Information is the data that has been collected but not further developed through analysis, interpretation, or correlation with other data and intelligence." (Joint Pub, 1993, pp. II-3) The initial step in information becoming intelligence is collection and identification of the information. "Information does not become intelligence until someone recognizes its importance." (Codevilla, 1992, pp. 387) Just because information is recognized as being important does not make it intelligence. Information becomes intelligence when it is analyzed. "Analysis involves the integration of collected information or raw intelligence from all sources into finished intelligence." (Richelson, 1985, pp. 2) *The Joint Publication for Support to Intelligence Operations* further explains the importance of analysis and the interaction of information and intelligence. "The application of analysis transforms information into intelligence. Both information and intelligence are important, and both may exist together in some form. They are not, however, the same thing, and thus they have different connotations, applicability, and credibility." (Joint Pub, 1993, pp. II-3)

B. SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NEWS REPORTING AND INTELLIGENCE REPORTING

The US. media and the Intelligence Community are not only similar in the way they operate but also in their ultimate goal. The goal of both communities is to inform and possibly warn the nation of the events that are occurring around the world. Naturally the audience of the Intelligence Community is narrower than that of the media. The media has the ability to reach every household in the nation, all government organizations to include the military, and the majority of foreign countries around the world to include our enemies. "Providing foreknowledge of both potential and realized enemy goals, strategies, doctrine,

tactics, capabilities, and intentions has been and remains the driving force behind the creation and operations of intelligence organizations regardless of the country or cause they support. Intelligence organizations provide foreknowledge to the national leadership by gathering intelligence information from a myriad of sources, evaluating this information to determine its accuracy, analyzing the information from all available sources, and finally producing and disseminating an intelligence product or report to the consumer." (Hopple, 1986, pp. 39) The Intelligence Community is not the only organization who provides such foreknowledge. The US media is also capable of providing this foreknowledge, but is not limited just to this type of information. The US media also receives its information from a variety of sources, evaluates the information to determine its accuracy, and disseminates a news report to its consumer. One vital step, analysis, is missing in the real-time reporting provided by news organizations such as CNN. CNN's emphasis is on real-time reporting. In focusing on real-time reporting, there is not enough time to add analysis to the real-time reports. CNN leaves the analysis up to the viewer. The Intelligence Community's core *raison d'être* is to analyze information. So CNN simply becomes another source of information for the Intelligence Community.

1. Intelligence Cycle

CNN and the Intelligence Community have overlapping functions in producing their final products. However, there is a difference in analytical ability. "The intelligence cycle is the process by which information is converted into intelligence and made available to users." (Joint Pub, 1993, pp. II-3) This cycle is comprised of the following steps: planning and direction, collection, processing, production and analysis, and dissemination. (Richelson, 1985, pp. 3) The media also goes through a similar cycle in order to produce its product. The steps in the media cycle, like that of intelligence, are continually

occurring. News organizations such as CNN do not have time to analyze their information when conducting real-time reporting.

a. Planning and Direction

Planning and direction oversees the entire process starting with the identification of the need for data and ending with the final delivery of an intelligence product to a consumer. (Richelson, 1985, pp. 3) In the case of network news, planning and directing is the primary job of an assignment editor located at the network headquarters. All information concerning potential news stories is routed through the assignment desk. The assignment editor is responsible for matching reporters and camera crews with the appropriate story as well as following the status of the news story.

b. Collection

The second step in the cycle is collection. "Collection can be defined as the purposeful acquisition of any information that might be desired by analyst, consumer, or operator." (Richelson, 1985, pp. 2) The Intelligence Community collects information from various sources and fuses them together in order to give the consumer the most accurate and reliable intelligence available. "Good intelligence always requires multiple sources as inputs to the analytical equation to broaden the scope of the intelligence product as well as to limit the possibility of enemy deception through the manipulation of a single source of intelligence information." (Hopple, 1986, pp. 39) Like intelligence, good news also requires multiple sources of information. "There are many forms of information that are collected by the Intelligence Community to include open source collection, clandestine collection, human source collection, or technical collection." (Richelson, 1985, pp. 2) The media can be classified into the open source collection category. In the media, there are many forms of information. Reporters get the news by going to the scene of the news, by talking to people and by consulting secondary sources. (Campbell, 1961, pp. 27) The

Intelligence Community can use CNN's information not only as a cue but also a means to check other information.

c. Processing

The third step in the cycle is processing. The Intelligence Community utilizes the following definition, "Processing is concerned with the conversion of the vast amount of information coming into the system to a form more suitable for the production of finished intelligence." (Richelson, 1985, pp. 4) The media takes the information that it has collected and processes it into a form that will be produced in the fourth step. Once a news reporter has collected all of the information he/she needs for a story, then he/she will take this information and put it into the form of a written news story.

d. Production and Analysis

Once the media and the Intelligence Community have processed their information, they then move onto the fourth step of production and analysis. As stated before, the media and CNN, in particular, produces its information but does not necessarily have time in real-time reporting to analyze the information. The Intelligence Community operates by the following definition, "Production and analysis refers to the conversion of basic information into finished intelligence. This step usually collects what is called "raw intelligence" which may not be complete as well as contradictory. The intelligence analyst is an important part of this step because it his/her responsibility to piece the "raw intelligence" together to give it some meaning." (Richelson, 1985, pp. 4) By the time the media reaches this step of the cycle, it has already put meaning to the information it has collected by putting it in the form of a written news story. Production as far as the media cycle is concerned, deals with the editing of the written news story (copy) by the copy editors and other editors within the organization. The copy is edited for the way it flows as well as grammar and punctuation, but not necessarily analyzed. In the CNN's case, it is the

reporter's job to analyze the information if there is time. In the case of real-time reporting, there is no time to analyze. The ultimate goal of the media is to report the facts where the Intelligence Community goes beyond this step and tries to put meaning to the facts by analyzing.

e. Dissemination

The fifth and final step in the cycle of both organizations is dissemination. Dissemination actually means the same thing for both organizations. It is the distribution of the finished intelligence product or the finished news story to the consumer. The media may distribute its product via a newspaper or television and radio broadcast. The Intelligence Community is transitioning from distributing its product via print to other means such as Joint Deployable Intelligence Support System (JDISS), briefings, films and video. The means of transmission for both CNN and Intelligence Community are basically the same: electronic data streams.

These new technological capabilities have allowed the media to transmit news information much faster, in greater quantities, and to more areas than in the past.. The real-time news information transmitted during the war (Desert Shield/Desert Storm) was very useful for military intelligence purposes. In previous wars, the media's information was often not suitable for intelligence purposes because of the time delay produced by older media technologies. The recent changes in the speed and timeliness of the media press has altered the military importance of what in the past would have been benign information. These changes have increased the amount of militarily useful information that can be found in the modern media. (Ryan, 1993, pp. 23)

The media and the Intelligence Community also share some problems. "Since such inherent similarities exist between the media and the Intelligence Community, in their information-gathering roles, it is no surprise that we can find a number of problems

which they hold in common." (Hopple, 1986, pp. 249) Both organizations are concerned with winning over their audiences. Newspapers are concerned about selling as many papers as possible, television news programs are concerned about reaching as many households as possible, and the intelligence community is concerned about reaching their consumers. "A second problem is that the Intelligence Community and the news media are burdened by biases in their gathering of information." (Hopple, 1986, pp. 250) It is difficult no matter what line of work an individual is in not to bring bias to the job because all humans have their own opinions.

It is technology that will allow news organizations such as CNN to reach areas of crisis before the military. In doing so, CNN is providing the Intelligence Community with information and not intelligence. Now that the basic functions that the Intelligence Community and the media go through to produce their final product have been introduced, it is necessary to examine the manner in which CNN operates. It is the ability to be able to understand how CNN operates that will provide the Intelligence Community with insight into the intelligence potential of CNN.

III. CABLE NEWS NETWORK

R.E. "Ted" Turner's vision of a 24 hour news network came into being when he established a team of news people and technicians to create CNN in the 1970s. On June 1, 1980, CNN went on the air for the first time. On its first day, CNN reached 1.7 million cable households. By 1992, CNN was the largest television news gathering organization in the US. "CNN's quantitative success reflects the qualitative kernel of its birth and its continuing reason for being: an unshakable commitment to delivering the world's news factually, in-depth and as it happens, to viewers in every corner of the globe." (CNN Pamphlet) The purpose of this chapter is to examine the manner in which CNN operates. The key to being able to rationally think about the intelligence potential of CNN's information is understanding how they make decisions. Knowing how CNN makes its decisions offers the Intelligence Community insight into the credibility, reliability and objectivity of CNN's information.

In April of 1982, CNN won a lawsuit against the three major networks and the White House to gain access to the White House Press Pool. CNN became the first network in September of 1985 to provide Europe with a live, 24 hour news network. CNN began transmitting in the People's Republic of China in February of 1987, and by 1988, CNN had reached 50 percent of US television households. And in 1989, CNN began transmitting to the continent of Africa, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent and the region of Southeast Asia making CNN available 24 hours a day worldwide. It is CNN's world wide coverage that makes it an important source of information to the Intelligence Community. CNN, thanks to technology, has the ability to gain access to people and places that the Intelligence Community can not reach.

A. VIEWERSHIP

Over the past 14 years CNN has proven itself as a news organization that covers news events around the world. "The bombing of the US Marine Corps barracks in Lebanon in 1983, the *Challenger* space shuttle tragedy in 1985, the heartwarming rescue of Jessica McClure from an abandoned well in west Texas in 1987, and the Tiananmen Square crisis in Beijing in 1989 showed the world how thoroughly CNN could cover major crises and disasters." (Smith, 1991, pp. 12) By 1990, CNN had reached 53 million homes by cable and 84 countries. In 1990, it consisted of 1700 staffers and seventeen bureaus. At the start of the Gulf War in 1991, CNN was reaching 108 countries and had grown to include 1800 staffers and 24 bureaus. (Smith, 1991, pp. 13)

CNN now has 28 news bureaus and has more than 500 broadcast TV affiliates worldwide. These 28 news bureaus worldwide enable CNN to provide coverage of events from all over the world. CNN's domestic news bureaus are located in: Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, San Francisco and Washington, DC. Its international news bureaus are located in: Amman, Bangkok, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, Cairo, Jerusalem, London, Managua, Manila, Moscow, Nairobi, New Delhi, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Rome, Santiago, Seoul and Tokyo. It is also a subscriber to Worldwide Television News as well as a participant in Eurovision, Intervision and Asian Broadcasting Union news pools covering Europe, North America, the Middle and Far East and the Eastern European countries. CNN also maintains news exchange agreements with numerous international broadcasters. (CNN Pamphlet)

CNN's international audience includes 22 Caribbean countries, 19 Latin America countries, 24 countries in Asia and the Pacific, 33 European countries, 11 Middle Eastern countries, two North American countries and 26 African countries. In order to handle this large international audience, CNN created CNN International (CNNI) which provides

continuous news reports of major world events, live breaking coverage supported by in-depth analysis, worldwide business and financial news and a variety of informative features 24 hours a day. "Transmitted via an international network of nine satellites, CNNI is available by subscription to cable and satellite television viewers, hotels, businesses, government institutions and broadcasters throughout the world." (CNN Pamphlet) CNNI is broadcast to all areas of the world via this satellite network except to the North Pole, Antarctica, Greenland and parts of north-eastern Siberia. CNN and CNNI combined reach over 130 million households worldwide. Approximately 60 percent of CNNI's programming is produced exclusively for an international audience. (CNN Pamphlet)

CNN provides a service that no other news organization can match: twenty-four hour continuous coverage of the globe. "One of CNN's biggest strengths is its technical ability to pull together a large amount of information from various places and feed it into the control room in Atlanta." (Smith, 1991, pp. 13) Producers have a variety of material to choose from: live and taped shots, live telephone hookups, and military experts. Immediate access to all of this material allows the producers to quickly place stories on the air. Each day the producers have scripted stories, dozens of guest experts and a great deal of satellite time. (Smith, 1991, pp. 13-14) "This diverse menu of choices came about because there were many producers and reporters in the field feeding information to producers in the control room in Atlanta and telling them about present and upcoming stories." (Smith, 1991, pp. 14)

B. OPERATIONS

CNN's headquarters is located in Atlanta, Georgia, where the top executives run their worldwide operations. "The control room in Atlanta is the nerve center for the entire operation." (Smith, 1991, pp. 14) The control room consists of 60 television monitors for technicians, producers and senior producers. The normal pit crew consists of seven

people, but during a major of event it expands to include 12 people. "The executive producers could communicate directly to dozens of reporters throughout the world through ear pieces and at the same time give directions to anchors and military experts sitting at desks in Atlanta and Washington." (Smith, 1991, pp. 14)

CNN has made every effort to use all of the technical means at its disposal to help facilitate the flow of information throughout the vast organization located around the world. The executives in Atlanta are able to communicate with their reporters and news bureaus around the world via an electronic mail system. CNN has computer terminals located in hundreds of locations. This system is used by top executives to communicate to their staff around the world. "Using this computer system, CNN employees could call up the major American and European wire services ... They could also send and receive private messages to and from anyone else in CNN." (Smith, 1991, pp. 15) No time is wasted in trying to contact people via telephone. Time is of the greatest essence for CNN.

CNN's continuous search for the latest and greatest technology gives them an edge over their competitors, especially during major world events. Before the Gulf War broke out, CNN was able to acquire new satellite up-links that would allow reporters to conduct live interviews around the world. Previously, CNN had to schedule satellite time in order to conduct these types of interviews. "Although the other networks had some fine producers and reporters in the field, they did not have as many people in as many key places, nor did they have enough satellite time to transmit extensive live coverage." (Smith, 1991, pp. 16) As a result, CNN incurs high costs for the ability to be transmit at any time from practically any place in the world. CNN is committed, especially during a major event, to using live coverage rather than taped material. (Smith, 1991, pp. 16)

In the past 14 years CNN has been refining and improving its methods of operation. From the very beginning CNN was committed to covering as much information

from as many locations that it could possibly handle. "CNN officials, from top executive to junior technician, had planned for rapid-fire coverage emanating from many locations." (Smith, 1991, pp. 15) CNN has been successful because of this commitment to handle vast amounts of information in a crisis situation. "CNN's success also grew out of the fortunate fact that it had designed its control facility in the CNN center in Atlanta, its production and anchor desks, and its news area specifically for crisis situations. CNN executives knew that during crises ... CNN would attract its peak viewership. As a result, CNN developed a system for handling the most complex crisis in hopes of beating the competition during each and every emergency." (Smith, 1991, pp. 17) CNN's commitment to handling crisis situations naturally affected the physical layout of its headquarters. It is important to set up the organization in the most efficient manner. "Thus CNN executives chose to design a technically first-rate studio ready to accept lots of information, sort it out efficiently, and quickly broadcast it." (Smith, 1991, pp. 117)

Behind the anchor desk is the large newsroom. Located in the newsroom are three circular working areas where about ten staff writers sit. In the middle and above each of the circles is the copy editor. The national and international desks are located behind the three circles of writers. Located above the newsroom is the supervising producers and other key officials who monitor the production from above. The graphics area is located in the corner of the newsroom while booths for viewing television tape are located in the rear of the newsroom. (Smith, 1991, pp. 17) "Every key official in Atlanta is within a one-minute walk of the control room (pit) which is adjacent to the anchor desk and the newsroom. It is in the pit that everything is pulled together by the producers and the executive producers." (Smith, 1991, pp. 17) This layout has enabled CNN to become extremely organized and efficient at producing the news at a pace that is virtually

unbeatable. "CNN was ready with a substantial staff, a robust system, good satellite linkups, and experience in dealing with many crises on a twenty-four hour basis." (Smith, 1991, pp. 18)

Executive producers, who answer to supervising producers, are responsible for three-blocks of time and each one hour block of time is in the control of line producers. An executive producer who was responsible for the four to seven p.m. block starts first thing in the morning with the monitoring of CNN and other networks in order to identify the important issues of the day. While at home in the mornings, the executive producer ties into CNN's electronic mail system via modem in order to review news wires. After viewing the news wires, the producer also reads several newspapers. All of this effort is an attempt to identify stories. On the way in to the studio, the producer continues to monitor CNN radio in order to stay on top of important information. Once the producer arrives at the studio, he/she holds a meeting with the three producers responsible for each hour during the three-hour block. During the meeting, they review the major stories of the day and decide how they will handle them. They also discuss what time they will air each story and which reporters are responsible for them. (Smith, 1991, pp. 115-116)

After the meeting, the executive producer reviews television tape; gives advice and assistance to scriptwriters; talks to the supervising producers, to the executive vice president and to the vice president of international news; and spends time talking on the phone to producers and reporters around the world. (Smith, 1991, pp. 116) "It is the role of the executive and supervising producers to be the strategists, and for the CNN producers to be the tacticians." (Smith, 1991, pp. 116) The functions that CNN performs here are identical to those functions of planning and directing and collecting in the intelligence cycle.

Each prospective expert guest on CNN is researched thoroughly by a team of bookers. "Most of this research is by telephone with people who are trustworthy, have

good judgment, and know who is particularly strong in their areas of expertise." (Smith, 1991, pp. 120). Every night a list of prospective guests is sent to the CNN library and a computer search is conducted on each one of them. "CNN's reputation as a responsible news organization is constantly on the minds of the bookers." (Smith, 1991, pp. 120) The bookers survey the top newspapers and magazines to identify those individuals who have been writing books and articles in addition to being in the news or on camera. It is the bookers' responsibility to contact each prospective guest and conduct an interview over the phone. Those individuals who cannot give short, concise answers are not invited to appear on camera. However, if the interview goes well, then the guest is invited immediately. (Smith, 1991, pp. 121)

In addition to guest experts, CNN also has guest military experts. During a time of crisis, these military analysts become a temporary full-time analyst on the CNN staff. These analysts are hired for their expertise in a particular area as well as their contacts in the Pentagon and throughout the world. The purpose of using military analysts is to give the viewers as well as the staff insight into military operations that are not well understood by the average individual. These military analysts also give the appearance of credibility to CNN's information. According to Smith, a great deal of time is spent in locating military experts who are considered to be accurate and reliable.

CNN's sorting process, as in the intelligence cycle, is extremely important. "If a producer can choose from more than a dozen stories coming into Atlanta, if that producer is empowered to move to the best story without checking with any of his or her bosses and if that producer is a savvy journalist who can recognize the most important story, the result can be extraordinary journalism." (Smith, 1991, pp. 171) According to Perry M. Smith, a committee system of decision-making does not exist for the producers to deal with at CNN (Smith, 1991, pp. 171). These producers are allowed to make large decisions without

consulting their bosses. This type of decision-making process is considered to be routine at CNN. (Smith, 1991, pp. 172) According to Steve Haworth, Vice President of Public Relations at CNN, the reporters in the field also possess a great deal of responsibility. It is their responsibility to check their sources thoroughly before using them in a story. These reporters also have a great deal of input into the types of stories to be covered as well as the manner in which they are covered. (Haworth, 1994)

C. PROGRAMMING

CNN can be considered to be in a class all its own. "The three major networks were just not designed or manned to handle a multiplicity of fast-breaking news events and live coverage, especially in the hours between midnight and six AM." (Smith, 1991, pp. 172) Smith explains CNN's success based upon its commitment to balance:

A vital element of CNN's success was its firm commitment to taking the time and trouble to provide balance in its news coverage. CNN executives and producers understood that every newsmaker wanted CNN to show him or her in a positive light. To put it more bluntly, it was the belief of the senior CNN producers that everyone who was not a CNN employee tried to 'use' CNN. Although CNN executives were willing to accept material coming from many sources, they did it with a full understanding that some of the comments might be slanted, biased, or unbalanced. CNN thus worked hard to ensure that it had a multiplicity of news sources so that the viewer, over time, would obtain a broad perspective rather than getting a consistent "slant" from any particular direction. (Smith, 1991, pp. 172)

The other news networks view presenting the news differently than CNN. The other networks tape most of their material and then try to pack as much information into the smallest amount of time. The other networks do not have the capability to present live material twenty-four hours a day. However, the other three networks do have some advantages over CNN. For example, these networks are extremely well funded and are very good at their jobs. Unfortunately for them "in a major crisis or war; the viewer

becomes willing to devote many hours throughout the day and night to following the crisis. The viewer who wishes to watch more than twelve hours a day only has three choices, CNN, CNN HEADLINE NEWS, and, to a lesser degree, C-SPAN." (Smith, 1991, pp. 173)

CNN's daily programming offers a wide variety of information to include in-depth coverage of major news stories as well as specialized, daily reports on business, finance, medicine, nutrition, science, sports, weather, fashion and entertainment news. In addition to these reports, CNN also programs several hours of timely newsmaker interviews in order "to broaden and deepen CNN's own analysis of the world's news."

"The centerpiece of CNN's news and information programming is over 14 hours of comprehensive news reports each weekday and more than 12 hours each weekend, with news updates every half-hour. With up-to-the-minute national and international news and extended reports on the latest development in business, sports and weather, CNN is able to give viewers in all time zones, virtually worldwide, unmatched depth and immediacy of live news coverage." (CNN Pamphlet)

CNN takes its programming a step further with CNN SPECIAL REPORTS which allows for an in-depth look at some of the most controversial issues. "While serious, hard-hitting, in-depth investigative journalism was getting short shrift elsewhere, CNN undertook a significant expansion of the network's investigative capabilities by creating a new in-depth and investigative unit in 1989." (CNN Pamphlet) Another important area that CNN places a large amount of emphasis on is providing up-to-the-minute economic news. Live interviews also receive a great deal of attention at CNN. "In short, CNN alone has the time and resources to explore all the news that affects our lives." (CNN Pamphlet)

CNN's devotion to real time reporting and live coverage is its greatest asset. CNN best describes its views on live coverage of events:

Since its inception in 1980, CNN's reporting and programming has been characterized by the phrase CNN LIVE. The network's signature is its commitment to the fastest, most complete coverage of breaking stories from around the globe. Not only does CNN have the worldwide news gathering ability and the satellite technology to permit live coverage of the world's most important stories, but it also possesses an equally important commitment to air those stories live, as they happen. (CNN Pamphlet)

CNN's layout and long term planning has enabled CNN to become extremely proficient at handling issues live. As a matter of fact, live coverage is a routine method of operation for CNN. "...CNN has set the standard for live coverage for broadcast organizations worldwide." (CNN Pamphlet) CNN's programming philosophy is to provide in-depth coverage of events in a timely manner. CNN is devoted to providing comprehensive reporting through investigative journalism. "CNN's commitment to live coverage of breaking news stories is second to none." (CNN Pamphlet) In addition to investigative reporting, CNN has been committed to providing many documentary specials covering topics from around the world. CNN SPECIAL REPORTS, which began in 1984, provides the viewers with many documentary specials. In order to expand their coverage of events, CNN created SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT in 1990 which has produced over 200 investigative reports and documentaries. "CNN's commitment to solid enterprise reporting is not limited to its special units, but extends to the general news staff as well." (CNN Pamphlet)

CNN has augmented its daily news programming with three hours of international news. "WORLD DAY, THE INTERNATIONAL HOUR and WORLD NEWS provide CNN's US viewers with network television's most complete coverage of world affairs. In addition, these three daily news programs form the core of CNN INTERNATIONAL, transmitted to more than 130 countries around the world." (CNN Pamphlet) CNN

broadcasts a WORLD REPORT segment each afternoon as part of THE INTERNATIONAL HOUR and the program airs twice each Sunday in an open-ended format. CNN also broadcasts INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS where international journalists express their views on world events on the weekends." (CNN Pamphlet)

CNN provides 15 hours per week of comprehensive financial news programs. During the weekday, there are Wall Street updates every half hour. The business news staff also produces a series of daily half-hour programs that deliver the latest news along with expert interviews to provide long-range perspective and comprehensive analysis.(CNN Pamphlet)

D. INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS

Now that an understanding of CNN's operations has been presented, what kind of information can CNN present that is valuable to the Intelligence Community? The threats of the "New World Order" are certainly different than those of the past. "Today's threats are different from yesterday's and in many respects considerably less predictable. These uncertain threats -- regional, low-intensity conflict, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and chemical and biological weapons -- have emerged as defense intelligence's new priorities." (Clapper, 1994, pp. 94) Naturally, if the threats are different so should be the collection means by which to gather information on these threats. CNN can help the Intelligence Community gather information on these new threats.

The Intelligence Community is interested in several types of information which can be broken down into two categories: short term or real-time and long term. "The United States used television for intelligence gathering and battle damage assessment throughout the conflict (Desert Shield/Desert Storm)" (Ryan, 1993, pp. 20) During a time of crisis, CNN is able to gain access to people and places more quickly than the Intelligence

Community. In a *Newsweek* Special Report, Lt. Gen. Charles (Chuck) Horner, the coalition's supreme air commander, emphasized the importance of CNN to him during Desert Shield/Desert Storm. "You know, some people are mad at CNN. I used it. Did the attack go on time? Did it hit the target? Things like that." (*Newsweek*, 1991, pp. 31)

CNN not only has the capability to provide the Intelligence Community with information concerning its enemies but also concerning US. military operations. At times, CNN can gain access where the Intelligence Community is not able. CNN was able to gain access to the Iraqi government during Desert Shield/Storm before anyone else. It is also this capability that can make CNN vulnerable to propaganda. The Intelligence Community can benefit from CNN's ability to be received around the world without any special arrangements. In order for the Intelligence Community to receive information from other sources, special arrangements have to be made for the equipment. These type of arrangements take effort and a great deal of time, which is not often present during a time of crisis. It has been speculated that the Iraqi government also used CNN as an intelligence source. "Because of the instantaneous information offered by the media process, all sides in a conflict can utilize its rapid dissemination of information. It is widely thought that Saddam Hussein was watching television, especially CNN." (Ryan, 1993, pp. 21) It has been speculated that Hussein may have been "using live television reports for battle damage assessment and targeting information for his Scud missiles in a way very similar to that of the United States." (Ryan, 1993, pp. 22) This presents a problem for the Intelligence Community due to the fact the US. government could use CNN to feed disinformation to its enemies. "... the speed and scope of information transfer has created a very real possibility that our enemies might gather militarily useful information from the media in wartime. Whether Saddam Hussein used the media for intelligence gathering purposes or not, intelligence caliber material was clearly made available to both sides of the conflict via

the media during Desert Storm." (Ryan, 1993, pp. 22) The problem exists when the Intelligence Community is not informed of these actions and places too high of an importance on CNN. This is one reason why a rational thought process needs to be established.

Certainly CNN can be a valuable source during a crisis, but what CNN really has to offer the Intelligence Community is cueing. George Allen in "Intelligence in Small Wars" advocates in future conflicts that "intelligence should send 'scouts out' as soon as it detects initial signs of an incipient crisis to assess the developing situation." (Allen, 1991, pp. 20) Not only can CNN give the Intelligence Community the initial signals of an incipient crisis, but it can also provide the Intelligence Community with assessments on the developing situation. In essence, CNN can be the scout for the Intelligence Community. It is CNN's worldwide coverage that makes it an excellent cueing tool. The Intelligence Community can take information from CNN on a certain country or certain event and focus its collection assets in order to gain more knowledge. "Early recognition is often the weakest link in a warning system because of the limited information available in the earliest stages of a developing danger ..." (McCreary, 1983, pp. 72) CNN can possibly strengthen this link by being a cueing tool and providing the Intelligence Community with information that can possibly alert them to potential crisis situations around the world. The Intelligence Community can also benefit from CNN's special documentary, financial and international programs. Economic intelligence is a new area of concern for the Intelligence Community and CNN can help provide information in this area. CNN through their special documentary international programs can provide the Intelligence Community with information on countries or regions of the world than may be our future enemies or even allies.

IV. LIMITATIONS

Television holds many of us captive: it dictates how we talk, look, think and feel. "Of all our image-oriented addictions, television is probably the most powerful and penetrating. From the time television first entered our homes in 1946, it quickly began to change every aspect of our culture." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 6) No where is the influence of television more pronounced than in telejournalism. It appears that television lends credibility to the information that it presents. "People like pictures, and the believability of video makes pictures more convincing than words ... People tend to believe what they see on video as positive proof." (Stech, 1994, pp. 41) The true impact of television on American society is difficult to determine because, unknowingly to the American people, television penetrates our lives in many ways. No two people are alike, so the impact of television on people varies from individual to individual. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the limitations of television, television news and CNN. By being able to understand these limitations, the Intelligence Community will be able to sort through these obstacles to rationally think about what CNN has to offer.

A. TELEVISION'S NEW WORLD VIEW

Television is unlike any other form of communication. It takes the elements of print and pictures from the newspaper and sound from the radio and puts it all together to give its audience an unique source of information that cannot be found anywhere else. "As we move from a literate culture to an image-dominated culture, we are entering into a new form of discourse which has its own distinct ground rules, its own biases, and its own unique characteristics." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 27) Because of its uniqueness in the realm of mass media, television has the ability to present its audience with an unique and different view of the world.

Television sets up an alternative way of viewing the world, thinking about life, and considering human relationships. Television, slowly and subtly, constructs an alternative reality -- a new world view. This world view influences the way people spend their time, the way they develop their intellects, the way they communicate with other human beings, and the way they conduct their daily lives. This is the level where our confusion and errors are most ingrained and, therefore, most difficult to detect. This is the level where the individual most frequently mistakes television for reality. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 75)

Television's new world view also provokes a response from its audience that is much more intensified than normally associated with print and radio: emotion. The combination of sight and sound gives rise to a great deal of emotion from its viewers. "Television is an emotive form of communication whereas written language is primarily a rationalistic form of communication. People respond emotionally and intuitively to visual images whereas language requires an abstract reasoning process." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 19) Like the old adage: A picture is worth a thousands words, television produces thousands of images a day with great speed and rapidity. Perhaps it is the rapid flow of images often repetitiously that has its greatest impact of all. CNN fits into this category very well. CNN can practically dictate the priorities of the US. domestic and foreign policy by the images it projects.

The underlying factor for the success of television is economic. If the networks are not able to assemble a large enough audience to attract advertisers, then it will fail. In order to be economically successful, a television network must be able to attract and then maintain an audience.

In order to hold the viewer's attention, television rapidly projects image after image at lightning speed. Indeed, television is one peak event after another. The normal processes of life, the times for quiet contemplation, times to reflect on what is being seen, are excluded from television's image world. Television is really a result oriented medium instead of a process oriented

medium, for a result is visible to the eye, whereas a process cannot be as easily seen. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 102-103)

This rapidity of image projection does not allow the viewer any time to think about what he/she has seen. The viewer is only left with the ability to respond emotionally and not rationally. "Furthermore, since television bombards us with a rapid flow of images, it does not allow time for critical, analytical, or reflective thought. Instead, we absorb image impressions. We can respond emotionally with sadness, anger, excitement, or fear, but images do not normally call forth higher-order thinking skills." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 26)

This emotional response is also a key factor in determining economic success for television networks. If the network is able to sway a viewer toward a product or a message of an advertiser, then they have succeeded in fulfilling their goal. The Intelligence Community needs to take into account, when viewing CNN, that television does not allow for thought. It is too easy to get caught up in the emotional aspects of television. When trying to evaluate CNN, it is necessary to realize that it is an emotional form of communication ultimately concerned not with truth, analysis or discovery of knowledge but the money making business.

1. Deception

One way that television presents a new world view is through the use of deception. "It is important to note that television, as a symbolic map, can be very deceptive. It is deceptive because, in many ways, it looks just like the actual territory." (Forsberg 1993, pp. 92)

Television is deceptive because it uses analogic symbols. It is through this use of analogic symbols that the viewer is led to believe that television has the structure of the real world. "For example, a familiar person on TV gives the impression of being a friend -- this a false analog. You can't touch, smell, walk around, or even talk with that person. You cannot interact with him yet the illusion that he is your friend often remains." (Forsberg,

1993, pp. 99) Forsberg indicates that "the illusion of an unedited, unbiased, unabstracted, concrete image" is what is meant by the term false analog. (Forsberg, 1993, pp.)

In the real world, no two things are exactly the same. All objects are unique. Every person, every place, every event is unique ... There are no precise exact replicas of anything or anyone. Television proliferates with stereotypes but gives the illusion that what it is presenting is unique. The television viewer is captivated by television because the images seem unique and unusual; however, this is a mere technological illusion. TV is actually presenting us with many stereotypes; stereotypes of people, relationships, places, and events ... Whereas everything and everyone in the real world is unique, television creates stereotypes. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 103-104)

This presentation of stereotypes is just one example of how television is deceptive. This presentation of stereotypes can be misleading to the Intelligence Community because it can give the viewer the impression that this how the real world actually operates.

2. Change

Another aspect of television's ongoing illusion of the real world deals with the appearance of change. The real world is constantly changing, nothing, especially time, stands still. "In the real world, not only are all things constantly changing, but normally, the change is subtle and is not immediately obvious to the naked eye." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 101) Television, through the use of certain techniques, is able to present the audience with the illusion of change. "Television, in contrast, through photography, freezes images but gives us the illusion of change. Television, through visual technique, gives the illusion of movement, of real-life process, of authentic change. However, it is only an illusion, a false analog." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 101) Television is also able to link real time with television time. "Television can present some degree of correspondence between real time and television time but, for the most part, time is edited, organized, arranged and rearranged to

fit the commercial business demands of the medium." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 103) It is important for the Intelligence Community to remember that television, even CNN, is edited, organized and arranged by people, with opinions and biases, to attract the largest audience possible.

3. Concepts

Despite television's capacity to project an illusion of change, it is not able to deal well with elaborate concepts. "Television, however, cannot deal well with complexity, paradox, degrees and shades of meaning." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 105) Television has a tendency to take complex social problems and make them black and white. "In short, television always simplifies. It also tends to place images into either/or categories which neglect significant factors and details that need to be considered." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 105) The world is not simple and therefore should not be projected as such. Everything in life, although we would like it to be, is not black and white. There are some social problems and occurrences that cannot easily be explained. At times in attempt to report just the facts, news reporters over simplify the situation. The limitations of the news and reporters will be examined later in this chapter.

As previously stated many times, television has the capacity to present many illusions and provide the viewer with a new world view. Another way that television goes about this is by taking images out of context. This can hinder the Intelligence Community's ability to accurately assess the situation. "Television, however, takes images out of context but gives us an illusion of interrelatedness. When we watch TV we get the impression of watching a world where everything is connected to everything else." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 108) This is not true, everything in the world is not interconnected. This world where everything is interconnected is produced by a few select individuals who create television

programs. This new world view is simply created by many of television's technical tricks. "The sense of interrelatedness created by TV is a pure technical illusion." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 109)

These technical illusions are created by *editing techniques*. The picture or image that a viewer sees on television is not always the way it actually happened. The creators of television programs have the ability to select what they want the viewer to see and in what sequence that the viewer is to see it in. "Furthermore, the images projected on television are taken out of their natural context. When the viewer sees an image of someone on TV, that image has been abstracted out of one environment and placed in another environment. The cameramen zoom in on specific aspects of a person, place, or event, and record those aspects, deleting everything else." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 109)

Television's ability to create many illusions stems from the fact that the creators of television programs are able to present an image or a view that they want to convey through editing. "Television, however, isolates images from their original context and reinserts, rearranges, and reorganizes them into another context." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 109) It is basically a selection process: certain images are selected and others are deleted for reasons that are unknown to the viewer. According to Forsberg, television was created by individuals who had business motive in mind. "It is important to realize that television is based on competition and that competition affects what the television viewer will see." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 150) It is this competition and quest for economic success that determines what information is broadcast and what is not. "There are only a few certainties about the news ... Another certainty is that major news media are still going to be driven by the profit motive; consequently, whatever sells they will purvey. Since its inception as a mass phenomenon, what sells is spectacular, titillating, eye catching, or sensational; truth, accuracy or context can become secondary." (Johnson, 1994, pp. v) In

order to think rationally about the intelligence potential of CNN it is necessary to remember that television is after all a business. The business perspective is usually the underlying factor in determining what to broadcast and what not to broadcast. Information that would be valuable to the Intelligence Community is not always broadcast because it is not profitable to do so.

4. Cultural Biases

"Because of its distinct form, television has certain inherent biases. " (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 83) Television is run by humans, therefore bias is almost certain to exist. No matter how hard an individual tries to keep his/her opinions, beliefs, morals or values out of their business matters, they still creep in. After all our opinions, beliefs, morals and values make us who we are. Without them, we would all be just alike rather than unique individuals. If our belief system did not influence the way we act, we would not do the things we do. "Television, however, is unique in that, as a form of communication, it can directly pass these assumptions on to the viewing audience through the image that enters the home." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 148) It is difficult for the Intelligence Community to sort through the biases of other individuals because each person has different biases. Even though it is difficult to recognize these biases, let alone sort through them, it is necessary to realize that they exist. A healthy skepticism is always good to have when dealing with biases. The Intelligence Community needs to keep in mind when attempting to think rationally about the intelligence potential of CNN that television is biased.

It was previously stated that television is oriented toward competition. The more networks there are the more fierce the competition becomes. Each one of them wants to out do the other and gain the largest audience possible. Competition is the second bias of television. The Intelligence Community must accept the fact that television is a huge and profitable business.

A second underlying bias of television is the bias toward competition instead of cooperation. Television is essentially ruled by the ratings systems. Based on this system, each television program - whether it be a news program, a game show, a docu-drama, or the weather report - is competing with every other program airing at the same time. The competition is between programs, executives, producers, reporters, writers, and photographers. These people are all in daily competition to create the most vivid, exciting, compelling images and stories which can be sold to the viewing audience. Advertisers then buy advertising time based on the number of viewers tuned into the program. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 149)

Fortunately or unfortunately, a large portion of American society truly believes that television is accurate or meaningful source of information. It is necessary, when rationally thinking about the intelligence potential of CNN, to realize that television is a form of entertainment and that sometimes the viewer will get accurate or meaningful information but not always.

... the problem is not so much that television is an entertainment medium, but that we do not realize that television is structurally biased toward entertainment and therefore we accept it, uncritically, as an accurate or meaningful form of information. We believe we are getting political, religious, and cultural knowledge from television, but in fact we are in the process of being entertained. As entertainment, television has carnival-ride values and priorities for its business. It is not concerned with developing serious reflection, thoughtful analysis, effective decision-making skills, or any other kind of skills for that matter. Television is biased toward the affective, emotional intuitive part of the human being. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 150-151)

It is also important for the viewers to understand that no matter how hard those individuals involved in television try, there will always be a certain amount of inherent media cultural bias present in the image or message that is projected.

5. Information

Whether or not the information one receives from television is accurate or meaningful, the viewer is inundated with large amounts of information. "Today the amount of information is massive and can be communicated practically instantaneously." (West, 1981, pp. 2) Not only is it the vast amounts of information that presents a problem for the viewer, but also the rapidity at which this information is communicated to the viewers. "The task of organizing information into what we consider to be knowledge -- into what information means for us -- is difficult enough when we have very little information. When we have massive amounts of information, some of that information is likely to be conflicting, and the task of formulating information into organized knowledge is greatly increased. Indeed, our structure knowledge can rapidly become obsolete with new information." (West, 1981, pp. 1) Television's ability to provide vast amounts of information in a timely manner makes it difficult for the Intelligence Community to sort through all of the information it receives from television. "In fact, US intelligence operates what is probably the largest information processing environment in the world. Consider this: Just one intelligence collection system alone can generate a million inputs per half hour ..." (Studeman, 1992, pp. 88) However, it has well-established structure for dealing with that particular information. Similar well-known and "comfortable" processes do not exist for open source intelligence.

The Intelligence Community is not only concerned about the amount of information it receives but processing that information into intelligence so that it can get it to its consumers as quickly as possible. It is extremely beneficial to have a vast amount of information, but when conducting real-time reporting it is often impossible to sort through all of the information from television. Vast amounts of information are easier to handle for the Intelligence Community when performing long range planning and analysis. The

Intelligence Community has time to analyze the information in this case. One other problem with receiving information in a timely manner is the fact that television's information may reach the Intelligence Community before their other sources information, making it difficult to assess the importance and validity of the information.

Television is able to provide its viewers with vast amounts of information in a timely manner. Being able to receive vast amounts of information rapidly can present the viewers with several problems. "Increased information is generally considered advantageous. Rightly so. Because of this, it may seem puzzling that increasing the amount of information may increase the difficulties of determining the implications of available information or of bringing information to bear on problem solving. There are several considerations which make massive amounts of information problematic for us." (West, 1981, pp. 3-4) Charles West in *The Social and Psychological Distortion of Information* explains that it is human nature to want simple and concise answers. One problem with acquiring vast amounts of information deals with the fact that the more information we acquire the more we are faced with complexity. (West, 1981, pp. 4) "Certainly more information, information which increase ambiguity and which reveal complexity goes against this human yen for simplicity, permanence, and exactness." (West, 1981, pp. 4) This is true for the Intelligence Community. More information has the ability to confuse and often complicate the big picture, making it difficult for the Intelligence Community to accurately the assess the situation.

According to West, another problem with massive amounts of information is the ability of the receiver to be able to choose among all of the information present and locate information that will support their personal biases. (West, 1981, pp. 4) This problem can occur in the Intelligence Community when an analyst already has his/her mind made up as to what is happening. The analyst may be purposely or unknowingly searching for

information to support his/her hypothesis. ". . . people avoid information that conflicts with knowledge, attitudes, and feelings that they already possess or that disturbs or threatens them in other ways. They seek out information that is reassuring and congruent with their beliefs." (Graboy, 1988, pp. 130) A third problem deals with conflicting information. "Awareness that one may discover new information which conflicts with present information may lead to increased uncertainty." (West, 1981, pp. 5) This occurs on a daily basis in the Intelligence Community. Finally, humans have limits as to the amount of information they can process. "Another problem with massive amounts of information is the recognized human limits in our ability to analyze the implication of information. Personal judgments are not likely to be accurate or complete when the items of information go beyond a certain number. Beyond that number most people cannot resolve conflicts and properly weigh implications." (West, 1981, pp. 5) Too much information has the capacity to overload one's mind.

B. TELEVISION NEWS

Television news is the biggest and most important sources of information for many Americans. W. Lance Bennett tries to explain why the news is so important and some of the problems with placing a great deal of significance upon the news.

On the one hand, few things are as much a part of our lives as the news. With the advent of sophisticated mass communications, the news has become a sort of instant historical record of the pace, progress, problems, and hopes of society. On the other hand -- and here's the puzzle -- the news provides, at best, a superficial and distorted image of society. From the tremendous number of events occurring in America each day, the typical news fare covers only a narrow range of issues, from the viewpoints of an even narrower range of sources, with emphasis placed on drama over depth, human interest over social significance, and formula reporting over perceptive analysis. The puzzle, put simple, is this: How can anything so superficial be so central to our lives? (Bennett, 1988, pp. xi)

Maybe one of the reasons that the news has become so central to our lives is the access to television news, especially a network, such as CNN, that provides the viewer with 24 hours of news. In the hustle and bustle of the world today, the television news has become a quick and easy way to stay on top of current events. As matter of fact, Americans like being able to acquire their information via television so much that CNN has become a tremendous success. Practically anywhere in the world, CNN is able to provide national and international news at a moments notice. CNN provides vast amounts of information in a timely manner. Even though CNN can provide vast amounts of information in a timely they can not be every where all the time. Certainly, CNN provides viewers with much more in-depth coverage of the world than any other television news organization, but they can not cover every single story around the world. "There are currently more than two dozen regional wars. Television news cameras put a handful of them on the diplomatic radar screen and thereby go some way to prioritizing crisis management." (Gowing, 1994, pp. 187).

Many people believe that the television news is a reliable source of information, but this may not necessarily be true. According to Richard Halloran, the single most legitimate complaint about the press and television is that they are inaccurate. "The press and television are rampant with errors of fact, many of them minor, such as getting an officer's rank wrong, or misquoting him slightly but enough to change the meaning of what he said, or leaving out an important qualifier that would have put the event or speed into perspective." (Halloran, 1987, pp. 17) According to Loren Thompson, the media during Desert Shield/Desert Storm often broadcast inaccurate reports because of time constraints. "The networks repeatedly broadcast reports that were inaccurate or misleading because they lacked the information to get the story right and did not want to be scooped." (Thompson, 1991, pp. 178) Once again time was factor. The emphasis on immediacy

hinders the accuracy of many television news reports. "Television news coverage, particularly that of breaking events, stresses immediacy and visual impact." (Thompson, 1991, pp. 179) Halloran also suggests that it is these minor errors compounded over time that has caused the press to lose its credibility. Marie Gottschalk stated in "Operation Desert Cloud: The Media and The Gulf War" that the press can also lose some credibility when it automatically accepts the word of the military and the administration as being accurate and reliable. (Gottschalk, 1991, pp. 451) This could create a dangerous loop for the Intelligence Community, where the administration or military feeds the press with facts that may not be necessarily true and then Intelligence Community takes the information and passes it along to its consumers. Naturally there are other errors made that contribute to the decline in credibility, but one of the most significant reasons deals with the fact that television news is not a true picture of reality. "Television news appears to be a reliable, authentic, valid map that closely corresponds to the actual territory. However, it is, in many instances, a pseudo-event. The entire relationship between the image and reality, therefore, becomes vague and ambiguous. This makes it very difficult to know if the image of 'news' does, indeed, have any correspondence with reality or if it has been an artificially constructed and manipulated event." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 92-93)

1. Abstraction

The distinction between reality and television is sometimes difficult for many people to make. The many illusions that are presented by television can easily be conveyed by the television news. Even the television news can present the viewer with a new world view.

Just think for a moment about a visual image from a television news program. Every visual image presented to the viewer leaves something out. The camera can never show you everything there is to show about anything. It is impossible to photograph everything in any situation. Therefore, the

visual image only portrays certain aspects of any event. The image can reveal some of the outer characteristics of a person but not all of the person ... The image the viewer watches only reveals so much. It does not and can not reveal everything about anything. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 95)

The television news cannot offer the viewer the entire picture of an event. There is a selection process that occurs when deciding what to include and exclude in the news. It is known as abstraction. "When we abstract, we select out of an environment certain aspects and neglect others." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 116) Abstraction is an on-going process that is constantly occurring. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 118) It is a process that is so second nature, that we don't even know that we are doing it. "Abstraction enables people to develop theories, and to evaluate, correct, and modify theories based on continual comparison of the theory with the empirical world. As a result of the ability to create higher order abstractions, people have the capacity to think about the clarity and accuracy of their reasoning. People can evaluate the use of language and other forms of symbolism." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 116)

According to Forsberg, abstraction plays an extremely large role in the creation of television news.

The major mechanism at work in the development of the television news program is abstraction. Television news can actually be considered the end product of a multitude of abstractions. In order to create the technologized images that reach the viewer each day, literally hundreds of people can be involved in the abstracting process. Indeed, the way in which information has been abstracted to create television news may be considered its most significant bias. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 121)

When evaluating the intelligence potential of CNN one must realize that the final product one sees on television has gone through an extensive abstraction process. The television

news is the outcome of a multi-layered abstraction process. Because of this process, television news cannot be a true portrayal of the real world.

We also know that much of the time television news merely brings us the latest gossip. Always, however, it brings us abstracted bits and pieces of some event, object, or life-happening. The television news viewer never sees the world as it really is by watching TV. The viewer sees the news as it has been conceived by others: edited, framed, constructed, and abstracted out of all the millions of possibilities. When television news finally enters the viewer's home it is a world away from the real world. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 122)

Television gives the viewer the illusion that everything happened as they see it on the news. As stated above this is simply not true. There are many levels at which abstraction takes place. "Although the order of abstracting will vary from one genre to another, and within genres, all programs are created by abstracting." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 122) The seven levels at which abstraction takes place in creating television news include the: corporate, producer, director, writer and reporter, cameraman, editor and visual image levels

a. Corporate Level

The first level of abstraction takes place on the corporate level. This level is comprised of executive, financiers, station owners and management. "This is the level where the overarching parameters for what can be aired on a particular station are established." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 122) It is at this level that decisions concerning the type of news programs that will be aired is made. The corporate level is deeply involved in the abstracting process. It is their responsibility to decide what types of news to air and what type to exclude as well as the type of advertisers to carry and the types to omit. The type of audience that they want to attract is also the responsibility of this level. They make certain decisions to include specific audiences and exclude others. Management goes

through another selection process when deciding who to hire. They also decide who will and will not present the news and in the manner that it will be presented. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 122-123) "Furthermore, the ideological perspectives of management and station owners play a definite role in the message communicated to the viewer. The underlying ideological assumptions held by management influence what will be included as well as what will be excluded from the news." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 123-124)

"The entire process is one of selecting and omitting. In order to create the most successful news program -- which means the program that is attracting the largest audience -- management often utilizes the services of the news consultant. The consultant is a specialist at knowing what makes a news program rise in the ratings." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 122-123) It is the consultants job to help management achieve the highest ratings possible. Management is primarily concerned with ratings because along with high ratings comes economic success. It is necessary for management to be concerned with the content of the news programs. It is the content of the news programs that attract the viewers. So in essence, there is competition between news programs to out do the others. The fierce competition between news programs leads the corporate level to use news consultants to help them win in the competition. "They (consultants) understand the nature of the television medium and therefore realize that the news segments must be short, quick and visually interesting generally the formula for news success ... was reduction of the maximum length of a story to 90 seconds, regardless of the story's news value and relative importance to the community." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 123)

b. Producer Level

The selection process of the television producer is the second level of abstraction. "At this level specific news stories are selected, ignored, or eliminated. Of all the countless stories that could be aired, only a few are actually selected to be broadcast."

(Forsberg, 1993, pp. 124) It is the responsibility of the producer to decide which stories will draw the appropriate audience.(Forsberg, 1993, pp. 124) "Meanwhile, many other stories without external, visual images go unnoticed - which means not considered or critically examined. Thus, through this abstracting process, the message makers and the medium set the agenda for an entire nation and a world." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 125)

c. Director Level

The decisions made by the news director is the third level of abstraction. The news director works with the producer and other personnel. "The director has numerous responsibilities, from directing the video crew to providing direction for the selection of music and graphics." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 125) It is also the responsibility of the news director and other personnel to determine the image that will be projected. Here again a selection process is involved. "The location or setting in which a person is photographed plays an enormous role in the image that is created of that person. Of course, that is one of the things that television directors, producers, and consultants are paid to know and to consider in the creation of television news." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 125)

d. Writer and Reporter Level

The fourth level of abstraction is the script writers and news reporters. "These individuals have the responsibility of asking questions, going after answers, and shaping a story. The questions they ask, and the questions they fail to ask will determine the answers we receive and fail to receive." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 125-126) Answers must be short, concise and to the point. It is the responsibility of the script writers and news reporters to ensure that this goal is achieved. "If someone goes into a complex, lengthy, detailed answer it will not be suitable for television news. Furthermore, television news

thrives on emotional issues, conflict, and the false dichotomy ... Reporters and script writers must work within the limitations of the television medium." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 126)

e. Cameraman Level

Photographers, cameramen and graphic artists make up the fifth level of abstraction. This level is responsible for creating the visual images to be used in the creation and production of the news. "On the field the cameramen continuously make decisions about what images to record and what images to ignore. While photographing any object, event, or person, the cameramen make decisions about the angle, perspective, and point of view for which to take it." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 126-127) Abstraction also takes place when the cameramen edit the film they have taken. It is their responsibility to determine which footage should or should not be aired during the news. In doing so, "They look for the most attractive, dynamic, interesting, stimulating and aesthetically pleasing images." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 127)

f. Editor Level

The sixth level abstraction involves the film and audio tape editors. "At this level a large part of the film ends up on the editors' floor and is never seen by the television viewing audience. Normally, only a few seconds of many hours of footage are actually used on television. Again, this is a process of abstraction. The majority of images are omitted while a select few are for viewing." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 127) Once the prior six levels of abstraction have occurred, the result is the visual image projected by television, the seventh level of abstraction.

g. Visual Image Level

The seventh and final level of abstraction is the actual visual image, which has gone through several layers of abstracting.

When the audience finally watches the nightly news, they are watching images that have been produced as a result of thousands of abstractions. Even though the image is a concrete visual symbol, the ideas associated with the image can be highly abstract. When the television viewer watches the image, he not only responds to a concrete image, but he also responds to the highly abstract notions and assumptions associated with that image -- the stereotypes, generalizations and presuppositions embedded in the image. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 127-128)

Through seven layers of abstracting, the final product is finally projected to the viewer. But the viewers have no real concept of the process that has taken place to produce the image that they see on television. There are thousands of decisions involved in producing just one news broadcast.

The levels of abstraction discussed above do not occur in making just one particular television news program, but in every news program on television. No matter which network the viewer is watching, whether it is ABC, CBS, NBC or CNN, abstraction takes place. This layering of abstraction makes it difficult to present the viewer with an actual portrayal of the real world. Mr. Bennett stresses that there is a false assumption among society that professional news organizations provide a clear, informative and objective view of the world. "Recent research is beginning to paint a portrait of the news as fragmented, analytically superficial, hard to remember, and difficult to use meaningfully. Only rarely does the news contain solid explanations, and even less often does it present clear conclusions about events. It is also becoming apparent that the media are far from 'objective' in their coverage." (Bennett, 1988, pp. 2) Bennett further acknowledges that some people do actually realize that powerful institutions have some of influence over the news content and merely turn to it more for a source of entertainment. "Yet for all its

C. CNN

The limitations discussed in the two sections above also apply to CNN. However, there are some limitations that strictly apply to CNN. First of all, CNN's International program (CNNI) is different than its domestic program. Thus one intelligence watch center may see a different version of the same story or different news content all together than other watch centers in their direct chain of command and decision-making. The location of a intelligence center determines the information it receives from CNN. Time is one of CNN's greatest assets as well as one of its weaknesses. Most viewers get their information from CNN in short sound bits, which provides the whole picture of the situation. "Those of us who have worked in crisis management also know that the first report is usually incomplete at best and wrong at worst." (Baker, 1992, pp. 582) Time can be a limitation of CNN because of its commitment to real-time news reporting does not allow for analysis. "Instant television reports and so called instant analysis are driving down the quality of the news reports on complex events." (Baker, 1992, pp. 582) According to W. Lance Bennett in *News: The Politics of Illusion*, analytical efforts by journalists are often hindered by the fact that there is no standard guidelines for analysis or criticism. "Lacking real guidelines for analysis and criticism, media efforts to be analytical or critical frequently border on nonsense." (Bennett, 1988, pp. 45) Certainly CNN does some analysis in their longer documentaries, but on a day to day basis of reporting the news it is virtually impossible to provide the viewer with analysis because of its one hour cycle of reporting. After all getting the story on the air first is one CNN's main priorities. Time also does not allow for thorough checking of sources. This presents the Intelligence Community with a problem because at this point CNN could be used as a source to feed the US. propaganda by the nations from which they are reporting. Lew Silverman, the managing producer for news at the "McNeil/Lehrer NewsHour, in a Gannett Foundation

report, *The Media at War: The Press and the Persian Gulf Conflict*, "warned that the immediacy of CNN made it subject to great control and censorship, and more susceptible to use as propaganda tool." (Dennis, 1991, pp. 35) CNN's view of how they should operate also makes them susceptible to propaganda. CNN employees are told that they are not an American network but an International one. In attempting to achieve this goal by providing balanced reporting, CNN could be used a propaganda tool during a war or crisis by both sides.

Another limitation stems from the fact that CNN's headquarters is in Atlanta and that the decisions on what to broadcast and what not to broadcast are made by individuals in Atlanta who may not have any expertise or knowledge in the area of the reports that they are making decisions upon. At least in the Intelligence Community there are regional experts at each organization who can confer with their counterparts in order to make the most accurate decisions possible.

Viewers need to be more aware of the limitations or as Bennett calls them flaws of CNN, television news and television in general. The images projected by CNN, television news and television in general have gone through an extensive abstraction process that has determined what will be broadcast. Certain bits of information were deleted or added based on the individual making the decision. It is important to realize and understand that there is an abstraction involved. Once there is a better understanding of how the images projected to the viewer are created, then, perhaps, viewers, particularly the Intelligence Community, will be able to rationally think about the intelligence potential of CNN.

V. RATIONAL THINKING

"Every person is unique, no two people are alike, and no two people will respond exactly in the same way to television. Since television affects every individual differently, it is necessary to develop a method by which to rationally think about the information and images we receive from television and CNN; this is particularly true for news/information, as opposed to entertainment; decisions are based on news/information, not so much with entertainment. In order for the Intelligence Community to fully benefit from the information it receives from CNN, it must be able to understand how it operates and creates the news.

"There is no coherent line of reasoning, there is no standard for measuring the validity of one image over another, nor is there a logical flow to the sequence of images." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 17) With this being the case, the Intelligence Community needs to develop a rational approach for understanding the intelligence potential of CNN. It is necessary to take many things into consideration, especially the limitations discussed in Chapter IV, when developing an approach to rationally think about the intelligence potential of CNN.

This chapter seeks to create a rational approach that can be used by the Intelligence Community, with intelligence analysts in mind, to sort and process the information and images projected by CNN. CNN is present in every US. Intelligence Center around the world, but no standard method by which to evaluate or use CNN has been established. CNN has become such a dominant factor in our lives that we may not realize that we are absorbing CNN's information and transferring it into our work.

Television is a very emotional medium. Many individuals in the Intelligence Community may be unaware of the fact that CNN's information is used by analysts every

day because CNN has become a normal part of our every day lives. CNN is a valuable source of information because of the speed and access the Intelligence Community has to it. It is also difficult to block out the information that an individual has gathered from CNN because you are consistently bombarded with the same information hour after hour. CNN's repetitive nature makes it all the more difficult to sort through the real world and the television world. But an understanding how CNN operates and the limitations of television, television news and CNN will be able to help intelligence analysts think rationally about the information or images they receive from CNN and what the intelligence potential is of that information or images. In order for the Intelligence Community to benefit from the types of information CNN has to offer, intelligence analysts need to understand the limitations of television, television news and CNN as well as develop an approach for mentally sorting and processing the information and images projected by CNN.

"The structure of television determines the way we look at the world, other people, and ourselves. To think critically about television, we need to become aware of how the structure of television shapes our thinking and influences our behavior." (Forsberg, 1988, pp. 154) One also needs to consider that television is not logical. "Television ... presents pictures that have no inherent logic and calls for no logical analysis." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 18) Finally, we process television in a different manner than we do language.

Television also requires a mental decoding process different from that required by language ... As Postman explains, 'Watching television requires instantaneous pattern recognition, not delayed analytic decoding. It requires perception, not conception.' Images do not require analytical thought; they do not require critical thinking skills. Images 'call upon our emotions, not our reasons. They ask us to feel, not to think.' (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 19)

Society has developed a method for processing the information received from print and the spoken language. Print and spoken languages force the individual to think where as television invites the individual to respond emotionally. The benefits that the Intelligence Community could receive from CNN is lost when its information or images are responded to emotionally. Basically, television elicits a different response from each person as well as being inherently different from print and spoken language. "This, of course, is at the heart of the problem. As we move from a literate culture to an image-dominated culture we are entering into a new form of discourse which has its own distinct ground rules, its own biases, and its own unique characteristics. In order to think critically about television, about both its content and its structure, we need to encounter television on its own grounds." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 27)

The approach set forth in this chapter will attempt to provide the Intelligence Community with a rational method for questioning the media and sorting through all of the nonsense. CNN is, after all, a business. It is the sole objective of a business to make money. In order for CNN to make money, it has to attract an audience which in turn will attract advertisers. It is true that images may be manipulated and illusions formed and that information broadcast by CNN at times may be inaccurate, unreliable and biased, but this is going to vary from minute to minute, reporter to reporter and topic to topic. CNN also realizes that if its information is consistently inaccurate, unreliable and biased, that they will lose viewers and if they lose viewers they will lose advertisers. Even though economics is a big factor in the CNN decision-making process, its economic success hinders on its ability to provide accurate, reliable and unbiased information as best as it can in timely manner. It must be said that one of CNN's greatest assets, especial as far as the Intelligence Community is concerned, is its ability to turn around information rapidly. Therefore, the Intelligence Community needs to be able to sort through all of the drawbacks and

limitations of CNN and come up with information and images that will be valuable to its every day mission.

A. MEDIA ECOLOGY AND CRITICAL THINKING

In the previous paragraphs, critical thinking is mentioned several times. Just what is meant by critical thinking? In order to determine this it is necessary to examine the science of media ecology and its relationship to critical thinking. Media ecology is the study of media as dynamic changing environments. Media ecologists study the relationship between people and their information environments." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 53) Media ecology is relevant to this thesis because it attempts to explain the relationship between the television and its viewers. "As an approach to the study of media and communication, media ecology is interested in discovering how our media environments shape our thought processes, attitudes, values and daily behavior." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 53)

But how does television impact our thought process? "Television, according to a media ecology, perspective is not necessarily our enemy, nor is it neutral, nor is it a mere reflection of our culture, but it is an information environment which shapes what we think, how we think, and how we behave." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 53) Once we have understood how television, especially the broadcast news, is created then principles or guidelines can be established and possibly be used to evaluate CNN reporting.

Alfred Korzybski was a theorist who wrote during the 1930s and 1940s and the founder of general semantics. "Korzybski was the first communication theorist to recognize language as a dynamic and changing environment. Indeed, Korzybski has been referred to as the founder of linguistic ecology and many of his ideas have provided an underlying foundation for media ecology." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 57) Korzybski's work primarily focused on the relationship between language and people.

His work includes an understanding of logic, the nature of the human being, and an educational approach. Korzybski provided us with: a) an underlying rationale for why it is important to think critically; b) a model for understanding the critical thinking process; c) an understanding of the focus of critical thought; and, d) educational techniques for teaching people how to think more critically. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 60)

1. Korzybski's Principles

In her book *Critical Thinking in an Image World*, Forsberg attempts to take the principles set forth by Korzybski and apply them to television. She believes that Korzybski's principles can be used to rationally think about television. One reason why she believes that Korzybski's principles can be used to rationally think about television is due to the fact that he developed an "effective, accurate and sane way of thinking", which the modern term for this concept is now called "critical thinking". According to Forsberg, Korzybski never used the term "critical thinking" but his work followed the same logic. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 59) "As Plato and Aristotle are known as the ancient founders of studies of critical thinking, Alfred Korzybski is known as the twentieth century founder of a non-Aristotelian logic and a theory of evaluation." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 59)

Forsberg takes Korzybski's concepts and forms them into four principles. "These concepts all form four major areas of concern: understanding the correspondence between our symbols and reality; being conscious of abstraction; recognizing the correct order of symbolizing; and understanding the structural biases of our symbols." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 87) The foundation for the Intelligence Community being able to rationally think about the intelligence potential of CNN's information and images lies in these principles.

a. Correct Symbolism

This principle deals with being able to distinguish between the real world and the television world. "The critical evaluation of television is a process whereby we

compare the nature and structure of television with the structure of the real world." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 89) This principle deals with questioning what we see on television. Questioning a source of information is always a valuable principle to remember when dealing with intelligence. It is an intelligence analysts responsibility to put the pieces of a puzzle together. In order to do this, one must question the information it has and compare it to what is known. "According to this approach, the process of thinking about television is an aggressive questioning process -- a process whereby we question how closely television corresponds to the objective real-life world." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 89)

The premises that deal with this principle include: "the television image, in order to have some predictive value, needs to have some structural correspondence with the structure of the actual territory; the television image is not the actual territory; the television image is not all the territory . . ." are all discussed in Chapter IV. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 97) The predictive value listed above is one important aspect of the Intelligence Community and CNN; the Intelligence Community hopes to glean information from CNN that will allow it to be predictive or as a method of warning and cueing.

This principle is an important one. The Intelligence Community to rationally think about CNN's information, it needs to understand how CNN operates and produces its network. "When we critically evaluate television, we want to find out how it corresponds to real life. We want to think about what TV leaves out, what it neglects, how it distorts, and how far removed it is from objective reality." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 97) Unless the Intelligence Community is able to distinguish the television world from the real world, then CNN's information will not prove to be valuable.

b. Abstracting

The second principle is known as abstracting. Abstracting, as discussed in Chapter IV deals with the decision-making process by which certain items, images, or bits

of information are included in our decisions and others are excluded. "The process of abstraction relates to television in two major ways. First, it relates to the way television is created. Second, it relates to the way the viewer responds to television." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 88) According to Forsberg, a central aspect of Korzybski's theory is our consciousness of how we abstract. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 117) Not only is how we abstract important in rationally thinking about CNN, but also how CNN abstracts. The Intelligence Community needs to know how and/or why CNN includes certain information and excludes others.

c. Correct Order

The third principle deals with symbolizing and the order that we do it in. Korzybski stressed that there was a correct order by which to symbolize. "Abstracting is both process of omission and it is also a process of organizing and ordering ideas and information. According to Korzybski, when we create our symbols and symbol systems there is a correct order to the process, a correct order of abstracting." (Forsberg, 1992, pp. 129) In order to critically think about television, we need to be able to evaluate the order that we symbolize. "Errors in thinking and behavior occur when we reverse the correct order of symbolizing." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 89)

"There is a correct order to both the way we create our languages, theories, knowledge, and symbol systems, and the way we evaluate our theories, knowledge, reasoning and thinking." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 130) According to Korzybski there are five steps involved in the correct order of abstracting. The first step "begins by looking at objective reality, critically examining the structural characteristics of objective reality, and then creating and evaluating symbolic reality based on objective reality." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 130) The second step "begins with investigating the real-life world, the extensional, empirical world, as Korzybski referred to it, and then developing our intentional labels to coincide with the structural characteristics of the real-life world." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 132)

Korzybski pointed out that the third step involved looking at the differences first followed by looking at the similarities. The fourth step in the correct order of abstracting deals with first evaluating the lower abstractions followed by the higher ones. Korzybski believes that the fifth and final step deals directly with the fact that if the correct order of abstracting is followed, then "the individual first experiences a sensation and then mentally creates an idea." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 134)

Television gives the appearance that it is created using Korzybski's correct order of abstracting. According to Forsberg, television does not follow Korzybski's correct order of abstracting and the its appearance that it does is simply an illusion. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 136) Forsberg indicates that television violates Korzybski's correct order of abstracting in three ways. "First, there are pseudo-events which are events disguised as real events but are in reality products of the intentional world." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 136)

Forsberg is stressing that a lot of the events that a viewer sees on television were created by people to gain an audience. A second violation of the correct order of abstracting occurs when images are selected to be aired based their business and entertainment potential.

"These underlying assumptions determine what images the creators of television will show and not show." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 136) The third violation comes about as a result of the demands of the television medium. Forsberg believes that the viewer never actually sees the world as it because images are taken out of context. "When viewing the television image, one never sees the world as it is in reality, but only as television portrays it."

(Forsberg, 1993, pp. 137) It is Forsberg's opinion that television completely reverses Korzybski's correct order of abstracting.

In an important sense, television completely reverses the correct order of abstraction. It does this in the following ways:

1. The constructed, manipulated, planned image comes first and the real world comes second, if at all.
2. The internal business bias of television comes first and the extensional world comes second, if at all.
3. The similarities associated with various images come first (often determined by media consultants) and uniqueness and differences come second, if at all.
4. Higher order abstractions come first through stereotyped images of lawyers, doctors, nurses, teachers, families, politicians, newscasters and lower order abstractions come later, if at all. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 137)

d. Biases

The fourth and final principle involves examining the biases associated with the structure of television. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 89) "Critical thinking about television is a process of examining the biases associated with the structure of television." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 143) Television biases have already been discussed in Chapter IV. The initial step in this principle is recognizing those biases. Once recognition has taken place then examining those biases should be able to take place. "In order to evaluate a language properly we need to be able to critique its underlying assumptions and biases. Media ecologists believe that this holds true for all our media. Stated specifically as a principle of television criticism, the principle would read: Underlying the structure of television there are certain biases, assumptions, and a world view. If we are to think critically about television we need to become conscious of its underlying biases." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 147)

2. Elements in Critical Thinking

Korzybski created what Forsberg calls the six elements of critical thinking. These are techniques that can be used by anyone at anytime to think more accurately. The techniques are as follows: critical thinking involves an awareness of differences; of context; of change; of what has been neglected, forgotten, or left out; of relationships; and finally critical thinking involves a healthy skepticism. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 172-180) These six elements will be modified as to fit the needs of the Intelligence Community to develop a rational approach to understanding the intelligence potential of CNN.

In order to help maintain a conscious awareness of the fact that our symbol systems are not the real-life happenings, Korzybski provided what he called extensional devices. These were mental devices which a person could use daily to think more precisely and accurately in any situation. They are devices that can be used by a person regardless of where the person is: in school, at home, in the office, in a congressional meeting. These critical thinking techniques, although they seem rather simple, can be used throughout a person's life to help her think more in line with reality. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 168)

Korzybski's techniques were established to evaluate language. But it appears that these techniques are a rational and orderly way of thinking that can be used in practically every situation. "These critical thinking techniques have been used to teach people how to think more critically about language, human relationships, legal matters, and medicine." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 172) CNN and television in general has the ability to provoke emotional responses from its viewers. Since television is an emotional medium, these techniques would enable people to rationally think about the information they receive from television.

a. Differences Between the Real World and the Television World

The first element or technique involves being aware of the differences between the real world and the television world. It is important to constantly remember that television and networks like CNN are a business and a form of entertainment. As discussed before television is a false analog.(Forsberg, 1993, pp. 172) "That is, images on television look like objects, people, places, and events in the real world, but on the contrary they are manufactured, constructed, and technologically produced imitations." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 172) In order for intelligence analysts to rationally think about CNN, they need to realize that what they see on CNN may not be a true portrayal of what is actually taking place. As explained before the process of abstraction can cause images or information to be distorted.

b. Being Aware of Context

Being aware of context is the second critical thinking technique. According to Forsberg, this technique "can remind us not to over-generalize about television." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 173) She also stress that the underlying biases of television in the United States are different than those in other countries. This can also be said about the different broadcast news. CNN is going to have different underlying biases than those of ABC, CBS and NBC. There is always going to be underlying biases as long as humans are involved in the process. It is extremely difficult to state the biases of CNN and the other networks because they change with time. People come and go and naturally they take their biases with them. Forsberg points out that this techniques is suppose to help people become more conscious of their environment and how people react differently based on their environment. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 173) "Intelligence and critical thinking involve the ability to discern the nature, the norms, and the conventions of the environment in which

we are situated." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 173) Intelligence analysts should recognize that underlying biases may be present in CNN's information and images.

c. Being Aware of Change

Korzybski's third element of critical thinking involves being aware of change. Television can keep an individual preoccupied with the present rather than the past or the future. "We have heard over and over that television keeps people focused on the present. By doing so, it causes us to neglect, forget, and disregard the past and to be intolerant of the future." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 174) This technique is also an attempt to help an individual realize that "television distorts our natural sense of time." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 175) It is the use of technology that creates this false sense of time. Something that would take a year to do can occur in an hour of television. "It gives us fast-forwards, slow motions, sound bites, bits and pieces of reality." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 175)

Intelligence analysts should analyze the amount of time given to a CNN story, i.e., how much time might have been put into researching the story, etc. Intelligence analysts need to realize that there are times when CNN is simply turning around a story immediately and not having enough time to analyze or research the story. Certainly, CNN has a monopoly on the twenty-four hours a day news coverage, but it is still imperative to their business to get the news out as quickly as possible, leaving very little time for thoroughly checking their facts, stories, etc.

d. Being Aware of Omissions

The fourth technique of critical thinking is being aware of what has been neglected, forgotten, or left out. In the case of CNN, being aware of what was omitted. Employees of CNN make decisions every day, more than likely every minute, of what to air and what not to air. They are constantly making decisions about how to cover a story. Many decisions are involved in the creation of a broadcast news segment. Many bits of

information are excluded and included for reasons unknown to the viewer. In order to receive the fullest benefit from CNN's information, intelligence analysts need to question what type of information might have been left out of the broadcast and why.

e. Healthy Skepticism

Forsberg states the fifth technique as involving a healthy skepticism. She states that the "television world is not to be trusted." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 177) The area of broadcast journalism is not one area where most people have to work very hard at developing a healthy skepticism. For many people it is something that has developed based on journalism's reputation over time. According to Forsberg, there are many reasons why television is not to be trusted.

It is not to be trusted because of the abstraction process that has take place to create it; it is not to be trusted because those who have created it have reversed the normal process of abstracting; it is not be trusted because when we watch it we reverse the normal process of abstraction; it is not to be trusted because it doe not closely correspond to the territory of the real-life world. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 177)

By developing a healthy skepticism, we are protecting ourselves from being mislead. It is important for intelligence analysts to be skeptical about the information and images it receives from CNN. Even if military or civilian advisers/consultants are used, the information put out by CNN should not automatically be taken as the gospel truth. It is not without saying that CNN's information could be 100 percent accurate one minute and completely wrong the next. Certainly it is in CNN's best interest to report the news as accurately and as fairly as possible, but there will be times when their information is not accurate or fair. When this is true, it will be very difficult for intelligence analysts to know when CNN's information is accurate or fair, if they do not remain somewhat skeptical. "If we blindly accept television without questioning its values, beliefs, and ethics, we will not

learn how to think accurately about it. Subtly, unconsciously, television will gain control and power over our lives." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 177)

f. Being Aware of Relationships

The sixth and final element of critical thinking involves being aware of the relationships between television and other aspects of life. According to Forsberg, this technique can be used "as a reminder that in the real world everything is interconnected. However, television takes images out of context and out of their natural environment." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 179) When rationally thinking about information and images from CNN, it is important to remember that what you see or hear may not be an accurate portrayal of what really happened. Phrases, quotes and pictures may be taken out of context in the process of editing and creating the newscast. The process of editing distinguishes CNN's images or pictures from imagery. When dealing with imagery intelligence, a system is tasked to take a picture and it does. A cameraman is tasked to take a picture and he does. But the intelligence system doesn't interpret; it doesn't change its angle to get the most emotionally evocative shot; the cameraman does.

B. A RATIONAL APPROACH

Korzybski's theoretical principles that Forsberg has extended to include the critical evaluation of television can be used as a basis to think rationally about the intelligence potential of CNN. The Intelligence Community is unable to tell how valuable and trustworthy CNN's information and images are to its mission. As stated before, the value, accuracy and reliability of CNN's information and images are going to change constantly. It cannot be simply stated that at any given time CNN is going to be 100 percent accurate or 35 percent accurate. What makes CNN so different from the other intelligence systems or sources is that it readily available 24 hours a day and the impact on the intelligence analysts and the Intelligence Community itself is unknown because its consistently

bombards them with vast amounts of information. CNN has a lot to offer the Intelligence Community as long as the Community realizes its limitations and weaknesses and is able to rationally think about the information and images it receives from CNN.

The underlying principle of a rational approach to understanding the intelligence potential of CNN should deal with educating the Intelligence Community on how television, broadcast news and CNN operate. In order to comprehend the value of CNN's information the Intelligence Community needs to know and understand how CNN creates its broadcast and what its limitations and weaknesses are. "We (media ecologists) believe that by teaching people to become more conscious of the structure of television and how its structure influences the content of TV, we can help people think more critically about television's effects. Then it is to be hoped that people will learn how to think more accurately, make better decisions, and behave more sanely." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 145-146) This is exactly what the Intelligence Community wants to be able to do, not only in rationally thinking about CNN but also in all other types of sources. "We need to explain to people that television is controlled by individuals and that those individuals not only exert a tremendous influence over an entire culture but also affect people for generations to come. People need to become aware of who is in control of television, the purposes for which television is being used, and how the people in control of television are shaping our media environment." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 79)

Basically what this approach is advocating is education and through this education comes knowledge of how the system works. Intelligence analysts understand how the systems such as Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) and Human Intelligence (HUMINT) work because they have been educated in the manner in which these systems work. This is not so for CNN or broadcast news. No one in the Intelligence Community is taught about how CNN operates and what its strengths and weaknesses are. In "Soldiers and Scribblers: A

Common Mission," Richard Halloran suggests that the majority of military officers are ignorant when it comes to the operations of the media. In today's world of technology, military officers are not the only ones who are ignorant in this area. "In short, it would seem that the vast majority of military officers have vague impressions, emotional reactions, and gut feelings about the press and television but are, in fact, operating in ignorance." (Halloran, 1991, pp. 40) Hopefully, the same approach that is used to rationally think about CNN can be used to rationally think about other open source information (OSI). Just as members of the Intelligence Community are taught how the current dedicated intelligence systems operate, so should they be taught how CNN and other OSI operate.

When we educate our youth to evaluate the role television plays in their lives, we need to teach them that television, like language, is not natural; it is not part of nature. As a human invention, we have the ability to gain some control over the way we use television. It is important that people are conscious of the powerful role television has, but we also need to realize that we have the power to decide how we will respond and react to television. We do, indeed, have the power to choose how we will use television. (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 74)

Only in the knowledge of how a systems operates, can one fully understand the importance or unimportance of the information he/she receives from that system. But in lieu of such a curriculum existing, the following guidelines can be used to begin thinking rationally about CNN's intelligence potential. The approach will be broken down into eleven steps. It is meant to serve as a guideline not as the rule to rationally thinking about CNN.

The question here is what is the intelligence potential of CNN? In order to determine the intelligence potential of CNN, there should be a rational thought process one

goes through. The importance of a rational thought process is stressed by a second school of analysis which developed in the early days of the CIA.

Proponents of the second school believed that analysts must be self-conscious about their analytical methods and their strengths and weaknesses. They propose making much more explicit what the analysts know, what they do not know, and how they come to know what they think they know. These proponents tend to be skeptical of the notion that intelligence can just gather facts and infer trends. Rather they believe that analysts use models or theories to decide what facts are relevant, whether they are conscious of it or not. They propose making the theories or paradigms that guide the analysts much more explicit and ensuring that the policymakers are aware of what basic premises underlie major analytical products. (Godson, 1989, pp. 8)

The question that should be asked to begin this thought process is: What do I do with CNN's information? Certainly, the intelligence analysts will not know the answers to these questions. But by questioning CNN in the following manner, it will force an intelligence analyst to rationally think about CNN's information and its intelligence potential.

1. First all, it would be beneficial to write down the information received from CNN. The reasoning behind this being that the meaning of the information cannot be lost in the translation for one individual to another. What was the content of the report? Could any information have been omitted?
2. Secondly, decipher what you know from what you don't know.
3. Now that the information has been separated into what you know and what you don't know, it is time to evaluate the information for its accuracy and relevancy by asking several questions.

4. One of the first questions that should be asked when trying to evaluate the information that is not known is: How long was the report? Did it provide the viewer with any analysis?

5. Another question that should be asked is: Who was the reporter and how well or accurate has he/she been in the past? Does that reporter have any experience in the area that they are reporting upon?

6. Some thought should also be given to: What or who was the source/s for the report and how accurate has that source/s been in the past?

7. One question that is extremely important in determining the accuracy and relevancy of CNN's information is: Are there any other sources of information to support/corroborate/contradict the report?

8. It should also be asked if this type of event in the report has ever happened before. Is this report a true portrayal of the real world?

9. Is there any possibility that the report could contain any type of propaganda or distortion? Could this report be a staged event?

10. Can the information from CNN be used to target collection in order to gather more information that would either confirm or deny the report? What is the collection timeline, i.e., is the event or phenomena likely to continue long enough to allow concentration of intelligence collection assets against it?

11. What kinds of bias could be present in this report? How many times could the report have been edited? What steps were taken to create the report?

In attempting to answer these questions, one is forced to think through how the report is created and produced. In doing so, the limitations, weaknesses and strengths are recognized. "When one becomes aware of the process in which television is created one

begins to realize the multi-levels of illusion." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 92) Of course, in order to evaluate the accuracy or relevancy, the true test will be whether or not there is any other sources of information to support/corroborate/contradict the report.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

"CNN is everywhere, I don't know why we need the CIA"

Former Secretary of the Navy O'Kieffe³

Former Secretary of the Navy O'Kieffe's quote indicates how important CNN has become. "If future military operations will most likely be humanitarian and peacekeeping roles, and I believe that's true -- the military will arrive after the media have landed -- not before." (Baker, 1993, pp. 3) It is this dominating quality about the media, especially CNN, that forces the Intelligence Community to deal with its presence on a daily basis. If the media is going to be there before the military or the Intelligence Community, doesn't it make sense to learn how to benefit from the information that the media puts out? "Few love the media -- fewer understand media people -- and fewer still know how to use the media wisely." (Baker, 1993, pp. 3) It is this ignorance of how the media operates that has hindered the Intelligence Community from benefiting from it is information. It is time for the Intelligence Community to recognize the presence and impact of CNN on its daily mission and learn how to deal and benefit from all it has to offer. "I agree with those who say that CNN has become the global network of choice which is seen in both the most advanced and the most closed societies. The real impact of this fact is not yet clear." (Baker, 1992, pp. 582)

CNN is an unique entity that to this day is unmatched in its news coverage. Its continuous twenty-four hour access makes it a valuable asset to the Intelligence Community. "Compared to information collected from satellite and other reconnaissance and surveillance means, open sources are relatively inexpensive to acquire." (Studeman,

³Superintendent's Guest Lecture Series, July 26, 1994

1993, pp. 87) Not only is CNN able to gain access to people and places that the Intelligence Community can not, it is also a fairly inexpensive means of gathering information. There is not a lot of cost involved in purchasing a television compared to purchasing a satellite. "There is no question that open source -- in comparison with other collection systems -- has the potential to provide a lower cost, lower risk supplement to intelligence collection and analysis. But access to open source data still costs money." (Studeman, 1992, pp. 91) It must be remembered that CNN is simply one source of information, not intelligence, for the Intelligence Community to utilize. "A newspaper article, a CNN report ... is no less intelligence than a report from a spy ..." (Troy, pp. 448) There is an abundance of information available from open sources such as CNN. These sources have a place in the Intelligence Community, and CNN seems to be the dominate one. "Although I believe that open source should be the Community's first step in attempting to satisfy our information needs, I want to emphasize that it will likely never replace the other intelligence collection disciplines." (Studeman, 1992, pp. 87) CNN can provide the Intelligence Community with real-time news reporting which inevitably offers little if any analysis. It is analysis that distinguishes information from intelligence. But it is these type of operations that make CNN an excellent candidate for a cueing or warning system. "But what is commonly known as the 'CNN factor' is also unpredictable, fickle and therefore difficult to unravel with great certainty. The impact is erratic." (Gowing, 1994, pp. 188)

Despite some of these advantages, there are some disadvantages to CNN. It is their access to people and places that makes them vulnerable to propaganda and distortion of information. CNN's quick turn around on information makes it difficult to thoroughly check its sources. Naturally, real-time reporting has no time to provide any quality analysis if any analysis at all. "For me as a government spokesperson working daily with both the

highest government officials and the news media, the major impact is that of speed and compression of response time. Electronic competitive news pressures are moving us past the speed limits of 'common sense' in government-media relationships. Instant television reports and so called instant analysis are driving down the quality of the news reports on complex events." (Baker, 1992, pp. 582) According to Baker, the quality of news reports can be evaluated on three criteria: accuracy, objectivity and responsibility. "How do I define quality in a news report or analysis. My measure is summed in three words: accuracy, objectivity and responsibility." (Baker, 1992, pp. 582) The accuracy, objectivity and responsibility are all hindered by CNN's real-time reporting. It is CNN's objective like all other broadcast news organizations to get it on the air first. But in doing so, a lot of important information and analysis is lost in the process. "But in the real world information is power and getting the information on the air 'first' is all important to television reporters and producers. Nobody has time to think." (Baker, 1992, pp. 582) How accurate or objective is the first report broadcast by a network such as CNN? Based upon the amount of time they have to turn a story around, it can be considered not to be as accurate or objective as a story that has been thoroughly researched. "Those of use who have worked in crisis management also know the first report is usually incomplete at best and wrong at worst." (Baker, 1992, pp. 582) It is the speed with which CNN turns around reports that is it greatest strength and its greatest weakness. CNN can reach the Intelligence Community probably faster than any other source, but its information may not be as accurate or objective as another source that has taken longer to reach the Intelligence Community. "Speed has raced past accuracy and objectivity, in news reporting today. Speed is the root of much of the problem in government- news media relations." (Baker, 1992, pp. 582) Despite some of these drawbacks, CNN may be valuable even its information is not 100 percent accurate or objective. Then again how often is any source

100 percent accurate or objective? In Nik Gowing's article, "Instant TV and Foreign Policy", one senior official acknowledged the inability of the media to be completely accurate or objective by stating, "Television is often wrong. We have to make sure we are right." (Gowing, 1994, pp. 188) Another senior official in Gowing's article added to this comment by explaining why television is often wrong, "Television does not focus for long enough, and it is often too sensational." (Gowing, 1994, pp. 188)

Despite this outlook, it should not be forgotten that CNN's information can play an important role in the intelligence cycle. "The highest form of intelligence enlightenment is the dynamic and continuous fusion of all data from all available sources. In this blending process a great synergy results, and this magic cannot be accomplished without unconstrained and continuous access to open source data. Open source can provide event specifics, background context, focus, contracts, improved accuracy, alarms, and many other positive features associated with data manipulation in an information age."

(Studeman, 1992, pp. 84) Open sources such as CNN can be used to not only support, corroborate or contradict other sources of information, but also to downgrade classified information so it can be released to the people who need it the most, the operators. "On the positive side, when an open source contradicts other intelligence sources -- or other open source reporting -- it serves as a flag for the analyst to re-evaluate his or her analysis." (Studeman, 1992, pp. 84) There is one important fact for the Intelligence Community to remember when they are dealing with open sources such as CNN, television broadcast news is a business that caters to the private sector. "Open source information is produced or published largely according to the needs of the private sector, without regard to the uses to which that information will be put by the intelligence customers." (Studeman, 1992, pp. 89)

It is the uncertainty of the accuracy and objectivity of CNN's information and its unpredictability that make it necessary to develop a rational approach to understand the intelligence potential of CNN. "If we do not develop the ability to critically evaluate television and other image-oriented media, we will eventually be controlled by the very inventions we have created." (Forsberg, 1993, pp. 84) Hopefully the approach discussed in Chapter V of this thesis will give the Intelligence Community the building blocks it needs to sort through CNN's information and come up with information that has true intelligence potential.

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